

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior listings of claims in this application.

1. (Previously presented) A method for providing continuous communication between passive equipment and active equipment, comprising:

monitoring signals received from at least one of said passive equipment and active equipment, said signals relating to at least one equipment state; and

upon detecting a state change:

converting a signal associated with said state change to a TCP/IP-formatted request;

transmitting said request to a host system;

receiving said request from said host system;

removing TCP/IP formatting from said request resulting in a file transfer protocol message;

converting said file transfer protocol message to a signal; and

responding to said signal by at least one of said passive equipment and said active equipment;

wherein said converting a signal associated with said state change includes:

decoding said file transfer protocol message; and

setting a signal line to a requested state.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said signals include directions for executing a carrier handshake operation between said passive equipment and said active equipment.

4. (Previously presented) The method of claim 3, wherein said signals conform to SEMI E84 specification.

5. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said transmitting said request to a host system further includes transmitting said request to a materials control application executing on said host system, said materials control application associated with said active equipment.

6. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said state change is indicated via pin assignments located on a connector that is coupled to said at least one of a passive equipment and an active equipment.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein said monitoring signals includes monitoring signals for at least one load port associated with said at least one of a passive equipment and an active equipment.

9. -20. (Cancelled)